

[<Back](#) [Print](#)

Public Participation High on SFC Project

News From Chuck Lesnick

May 16, 2008

Landmarking Paving the Road
Toward the Future
Blige to Benefit Yonkers
Westhab Wins Award
Council Grills Departments for
Budget Savings
Chuck Continues as
Westchester Municipal Officials
Officer
Save the Date
Everyone Loves a Parade
Yonkers Open Artists Studio
Tour This Weekend
Putting Pedal to the Metal

Sign Up

SIGN-UP!

Quick Links



The hearing concluded the second of two public hearings on the \$1.6 billion [SFC](#) proposal to develop Downtown Yonkers.

Of the 150 who spoke, most seemed in favor of the project although people still voiced concern regarding the density, height, amount of open space, preservation of historic buildings, sequencing of the daylighting, financing, jobs, tax revenues, affordable housing, and community benefits.

The public comment period remains open until May 30. Please direct all correspondence to Rocky Richard, Chief of Staff, Office of the Council President, 40 S. Broadway, Room 403, Yonkers, NY 10701 or by emailing her at rocky.richard@yonkersNY.gov. Fax: 914-964-1949.

While our planning consultants will work with SFC's to address all of the issues raised, the Council will also meet to meet to focus on some of the substantive concerns.

At 7 p.m. on Tuesday, May 20 the Real Estate Committee will address the issue of how much affordable housing should be

required and will also look at the reestablishing and refining the City's overall affordable housing ordinance. This may prove to be one of the most important meetings we have on this topic so I encourage you to come.

Landmarking Paving the Road Toward the Future



Jung Chin)

The City is receiving a lot of positive attention after the Council voted to landmark a small block of 19th century structures across the street from the historic [Philipse Manor Hall](#) last month.

The vote came after a group of Yonkers citizens banded together to present a historical integrity argument to the Council at the same time that the [Greyston Foundation](#) was making their argument to build workforce housing on the site.

The compromise--to do both--is an excellent example of communities working together to build toward the future while preserving the past.

With that, the NYS Association of Affordable Housing invited me to join a panel discussion in the city last week, "Strengthening Communities: A Focus on Historic Preservation and Affordable Housing."

Almost 1300 people attended. The moderator was Lorrie Pizzola, Deputy Commissioner, NYS DHCR. Panelists: Hon. Chuck Lesnick, President, Yonkers City Council President; Richard Libbey, Atlantic Beach Associates & PKRML and Associates; Ruth Pierpont, Director of the Field Services Bureau, NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Also in esteemed attendance were NYS DHCR Commissioner Deborah VanAmerongen, NYS HFA/SONYMA President and CEO Priscilla Almodovar, NYC HPD Commissioner Shaun Donovan, and NYC Housing Development Corporation President Marc Jahr.

The panel explored the challenges and opportunities associated with the rehabilitation of historic properties for affordable housing. We talked about successful projects, explored the financial incentives available, and discussed other tools that encourage the development of affordable housing as part of historic renovations and strengthening communities.

One panelist, Richard Libby, just completed the first mixed use LEED certified historic tax credit affordable housing project in the country. it is in Trenton, NJ.

Blige to Benefit Yonkers



The singer [Mary J. Blige](#) visited Yonkers Roosevelt High School last week to announce an empowerment and self-esteem program for young women.

The Mary J. Blige and Steve Stoute Foundation for the Advancement of Women Now Inc., or FFAWN, will partner with [Westchester Jewish Community Services](#) to open a social services center in southwest Yonkers that will target those who need help with parenting skills, education, vocational training or setting and achieving goals.

Blige explained to the audience that she dropped out of Yonkers' Roosevelt High School in the 11th grade. She asked them not to repeat her mistakes.

"Please get your education," she urged the students. "Education is key. Education is power."

Blige pledged to raise \$500,000 for the foundation and to allocate a portion of that money to the Yonkers center.

Westhab Wins Award



It was a pleasure to celebrate with [Westhab](#) last week when they won the [New York State Association for Affordable Housing's](#) (NYSFAH) Downstate Project of the Year Award.

Westhab's project, located at 28 Pier St., was touted for its innovative 12-unit design for transitional veteran's housing. Westhab works with homeless and low-income families beyond the provision of good housing by providing such important supportive

services as on- site case management; employment and training programs; community models and training; life-skills training; day care; children and youth development services; transportation; and linkages for mental health, substance abuse, and education services.

(photo credit: Jung Chin)

Council Grills Departments for Budget Savings

The Mayor's proposal to all but deplete the City's fund balance is a cause of major concern to the Council. This year, more than ever, we are scrutinizing each department's expenditures, in hopes of cutting back to save money without compromising the City's integrity.



While the administration has offered short- term solutions to keep the proposed tax increase at only 8.5 percent, it is not enough.

I believe that we must not reduce our reserves (emergency savings, if you will) in light of the uncertain economic times and the grim prospects for state next year.

Your opinion and ideas matter. There are two public hearings to this affect that I urge people to attend. You can sign up to speak after 6:30 p.m. that day, in person.

Tuesday, May 27 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers

Thursday, May 29 at 7 p.m. at Saunders High School

Chuck Continues as Westchester Municipal Officials Officer



After serving as Treasurer for the Westchester Municipal Officials Association (WMOA), I was recently appointed Secretary of the 70 year-old group which provides a forum for 45 cities, towns and villages in Westchester.

The association plans activities and takes actions on issues that have a beneficial affect upon public safety, health and welfare of its members citizenry.

(from left) Sam Abate former mayor of Ardsley and former WMOA President; Pelham Supervisor and current WMOA President Joe Solimine; Bedford Supervisor Lee Roberts and 1st VP; North Castle Supervisor Reese Berman and 2nd VP; Chuck Lesnick; and (not shown) Drew Fixell, Mayor of Tarrytown as Treasurer.

For more information, please call 914-948-2074 and ask for Executive Director, Anne Janniak.

Save the Date

The Yonkers [YWCA](#) is holding its 16th annual Celebrity Chefs benefit from 2-7 p.m. on Sunday, June 8 at the Ukranian Youth Center on 301 Palisade Ave. to honor the 2008 YWCA Men of the Year: Businessman Peter Klein of [SFC](#) and Educator Darryl J. Mack of [Roos evelt](#)

High School.

Hosts include Peter X. Kelly, [X2O Xaviars on the Hudson](#) and Robert Leggio, [Zuppa Restaurant](#).

Bring your friends, family and neighbors to enjoy great food, music and entertainment at the international all you can eat buffet featuring Italian, American, Soul, Asian, Hispanic, and Caribbean dishes.

Ticket Prices are \$15 Children 12 and under; \$30 Senior Citizens; \$40 Adults purchased prior to 4/30/08. \$50 for tickets purchased 5/1/08 thru 6/8/08.

Contact the [YWCA](#) at 914- 963-0640 for more information.

Everyone Loves a Parade

This year's Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony will be held on Sunday, May 18th.

The ceremony will take place in front of the City Hall at the Veterans Memorial at 11:00 A.M. and the parade starts at 2:00 P.M. at South Broadway and Radford Street.



Questions? Please contact The Department of Veteran Services at (914) 377-6700.

Yonkers Open Artists Studio Tour This Weekend

Come and experience what's going on artistically in Yonkers this weekend from Noon to 5 p.m. at the [YoHo Artist Lofts](#) and have an opportunity to see and interact directly with the artists.

Various disciplines will be on display including Paintings, Works on Paper, Sculptures, Multimedia, Pastels, Photography, Jewelry, Assemblage and more.

For more event information, map, driving directions, or to see the artists and their works online, visit:
<http://www.YOHOartists.com>

Location: 578 Nepperhan Avenue, 5th Floor (at corner of Lake Ave.) at the Alexander Smith Carpet Mills Buildings (enter from rear parking lot - entrance on Lake Ave.)

Date: Sat/Sun May 17 - 18. Noon to 5 PM Open to Public. Tel: (212) 317- 1423 ext YOH (964)

Photo above: Artist Elizabeth DeBethune's recent work on paper.

Putting Pedal to the Metal

Want to
save money on gas? Get a free gym membership? How about save the environment?

Karin Weisburgh did. The senior research analyst at Consumers Union in Yonkers is enjoying these and other benefits since deciding to ride her bike rather than drive her car to work. She now commutes 10 miles per day each way year round.

Her efforts were rewarded today with a "Commuter of the Year" award from the Westchester Cycle Club, a 1,200-member nonprofit bike recreation and advocacy group at a press conference also announcing a second place winner and five honorable mentions.

Congrats Karin! Keep pedaling!

Pictured above: Chuck Lesnick; David Wilson, president of the Westchester Cycle Club; Karin Weisburgh; George Constantin, president of Heritage Realty Services who gave Karin a \$100 check and who promote cycle commuting at their office park; and Dennis Power, who coordinates Westchester County's Global Warming Task Force.

email: chuck.lesnick@yonkersny.gov

[Forward the update!](#)

✉ **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to clesnick@aol.com, by chuck.lesnick@yonkersny.gov
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



Yonkers City Council President's Office | 40 S. Broadway | Yonkers | NY | 10701